

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

February 14, 2006

The Honorable J. Dennis Hastert  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
H-232 The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Hastert:

We are writing you today about an apparent abuse of the process surrounding the passage of S. 1932, the Budget Reconciliation Spending conference report.

What started out as an inadvertent mistake by a Senate clerk has become a serious problem because of the actions taken subsequently by the Republican Leadership of the House. According to a number of legal and Constitutional scholars, these actions jeopardize the legal status of the legislation. A letter from Congressman Henry Waxman, which we have attached, makes clear the fundamental constitutional problem.

Because of the mistake by the Senate clerk, the House and Senate passed different versions of S. 1932. On February 8th, the President signed into law the Senate version of the bill, despite the fact that the House had never voted on that version of the bill.

Since you knew about this error many days prior to the House vote on February 1, we can only conclude that the reason that the error was not fixed through a legitimate manner was because it involved another vote that might have failed the second time around.

Before the bill was sent to the President for his signature, the bill was changed yet again from the version the House had narrowly approved. Even though there were valid means at your disposal to fix the problem, you apparently chose to ignore that option.

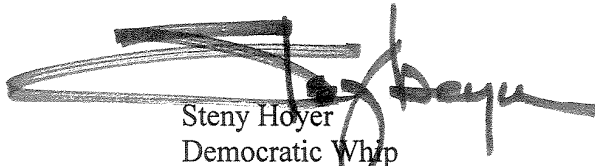
The integrity of the House requires that you take two steps to address this serious situation. First, we insist that you inform the American people of what happened and that you recognize the abuse of this process. Second, we urge you to reconsider this legislation this week and to work with the Senate to ensure that any spending reconciliation bill that is passed is identical in both the House and the Senate, as the Constitution demands, and then presented to the President for his signature.

We sincerely hope you follow this course of action.

Sincerely,



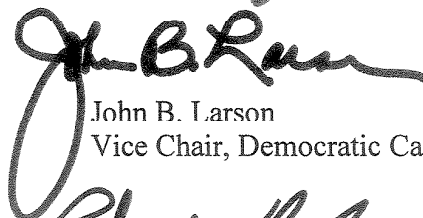
Nancy Pelosi  
Democratic Leader



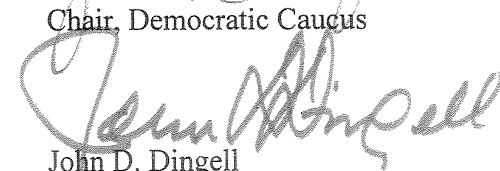
Steny Hoyer  
Democratic Whip



James E. Clyburn  
Chair, Democratic Caucus



John B. Larson  
Vice Chair, Democratic Caucus



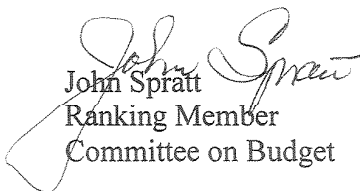
John D. Dingell  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Energy and Commerce



Charles Rangel  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Ways and Means



Henry A. Waxman  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Government Reform



John Spratt  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Budget